

2018 County Population Estimates released by U.S. Census Bureau Population and Housing Estimates Program (April 2019).

Maryland Jurisdictions and Regions

Highlights:

- **Frederick County population increases 1.9 percent, largest one-year change.**
- **Howard County population increased 12.6 percent, largest eight-year change.**
- **Southern Maryland outpaces all regions, has largest percent increase in population.**

2018 population growth and rankings in Maryland

In 2018 the state of Maryland reported a population of 6,042,718— an increase of nearly 269,000 since April 2010. Between 2017 and 2018 the state’s population grew 17,800, ranking 24th among all states (See [2018 Estimates for Maryland and States](#)).

Among the state’s 24 jurisdictions, Montgomery County is the most populous with over one million residents, as of July 1, 2018. Rounding out the top 5 jurisdictions by population are Prince George’s (909,308), Baltimore County (828,431), Baltimore City (602,495), and Anne Arundel County (576,031). {See Table [1A](#)}

While the state’s most populated jurisdictions are its primary city and inner suburbs¹, most growth is occurring in its outer suburbs². In the last year (2017-2018), Frederick County increased 1.9 percent, Charles (1.3 percent), Howard (1.2 percent), Harford (0.82 percent) and Calvert (0.70 percent). [See Table [1C](#)]

Growing and Lagging regions in Maryland

Among the state’s six regions (Baltimore, Suburban Washington, Southern Maryland, Western Maryland, Upper and Lower Eastern Shore), Southern Maryland gained 25,723 new residents since 2010, a 7.6 percent increase. Nearly 60 percent of the region’s new residents live in Charles County— its population climbed by almost 15,000 from 2010 to 2018. [See Table [1B](#)]

Suburban Maryland had the second largest percent increase in population since 2010 at 7.2 percent: adding 148,819 persons over the last eight years. Among the counties that comprise this region, between 2017 and 2018, Frederick County (4,689) added more new residents than either Montgomery (4,323) or Prince George’s (507).

Baltimore region expanded 3.4 percent (or by 89,725 new residents) since 2010. The Lower Eastern Shore increased by 1.6 percent (or 3,414 new residents), Upper Eastern Shore increased by 1.2 percent (or

¹ Inner Suburbs: Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, and Anne Arundel County.

² Outer Suburbs: Carroll, Harford, Howard, Frederick, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s

2,791 new residents). Population in four out of nine jurisdictions in the Eastern Shore regions lost population. Of the five jurisdictions that gained population, the largest increases were in the Upper Shore's Cecil County (gain of 1,724 or 1.7 percent) and Queen Anne's (2,462 or 5.2 percent), and in the Lower Shore's Wicomico County which added 4,462 new residents (4.5 percent gain) since 2010.

Western Maryland experienced little to no growth (0.05%) in the last year (2017-2018) and lost population (-0.6%) over the last eight years. Population gains in the region were only in Washington County which added 638 new residents in the 2017-2018 period and nearly 3,500 new residents over the 2010-2018 period. The other two jurisdictions in the region lost population. Allegany County had the largest decline, about 4,000 in the 2010-2018 period and 411 in the 2017-2018 period.

Components of Population Growth

The Census Bureau's Population and Housing Estimates program uses a cohort component method to produce annual estimates. This method captures natural change (births minus deaths) and net migration (difference in international in-out migration and in domestic in-out migration). Data on each component of population change comes from vital statistics (i.e., registered births and deaths), Federal income tax returns, Medicare enrollment, military movement, and administrative records. This information is supplemented by data from the American Community Survey. [See [Tables 2A to 3B](#)].

A consensus among demographers and census watchers is falling birth rates, especially in Western Europe, Japan and the United States. Many states in the U.S. are experiencing fewer births. The Maryland Department of Health reports that the state's birth rate has fallen from 14.0 births per 1000 population in 2000 to 12.8 births in 2010 and 11.8 births in 2017. Census estimates reveal that there were 2,500 fewer births in Maryland in the July 2017/2018 period compared to July 2010/2011.

Natural Increase

From April 2010 to July 2018, there were a total 600,546 births and 384,372 deaths in Maryland—a net natural increase of 216,174 new residents. About half of that natural increase was due to a higher number of births in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. [See [Tables 2A](#), [2B](#), and [2C](#)].

All regions, except for Western Maryland, experienced a net natural increase between 2010 and 2018. Western Maryland had a net natural decrease, i.e., more deaths than births. A closer look at individual jurisdictions in the Western Maryland Region shows that Washington County's net natural increase of 1,844 was eclipsed by net natural decreases in Garrett County (-1,944) and Allegany County (-212). The Lower Eastern Shore region had a net natural increase primarily due to the larger number of births in Wicomico County. [See [Table 5](#)].

Baltimore City experienced a net natural increase, over the 2010 to 2018 period, gaining 18,528 new residents. There were a total 71,466 births compared to 52,938 deaths. In line with national trends, there were fewer births in the City from 2010 to 2018—falling at an annualized rate of 1.7 percent.

The 2018 Census Population Estimates release shows that the drivers of population growth in the State are natural increase (+216,174) followed by international migration (+192,345) with few exceptions. The 2018 Estimates also indicate that between 2010 and 2018, approximately 137,000 persons left the state.

International and Domestic Migration

The top ten destinations in Maryland for international migrants, by share of total population, were: Montgomery County (6.8 percent), Prince Georges (4.8%), Howard (3.5%), Baltimore County (2.8%), Baltimore City (2.6%), Frederick (2.1%), Anne Arundel (1.4%), Caroline (1.3%), Somerset (1.2%), and Washington (1.1%) counties³.

Migration was the primary source of population growth in three Maryland regions (Western Maryland, Upper Eastern Shore and Lower Eastern Shore), and eleven jurisdictions (Montgomery County, Baltimore County, Allegany, Garrett, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties). Net international migration impacted growth in nine jurisdictions while domestic migration had the greater impact on two jurisdictions. [See [Table 5](#)].

Montgomery County, over the eight-year period 2010 to 2018, has gained more international migrants (+71,230) than newborns (+59,144) and a large enough number to minimize the effects of domestic outmigration (-49,603). Baltimore County saw a net increase in international migration (+23,398) and births (+14,791) but lost over 14,000 residents to domestic out-migration. Baltimore City, which ranks fourth in number of international migrants, was home to (+15,943) foreign born residents. However, neither international migration nor natural increase (+18,528) were sufficient to replace the City's outmigration: from 2010 to 2018, about 52,500 persons exited Baltimore City to other parts of the State and Country.

In the eastern and western parts of the state, net natural increase plays a smaller role in population growth. International migration is a key driver in the Western Maryland region (+2,275) and the Lower Eastern Shore region (+3,678). Allegany County and Garrett had smaller gains in net international migration but a larger exodus of domestic migrants, -2,620 and -820 respectively. It is net domestic migration that propels growth in Queen Anne's County at 1,623 new movers and in Wicomico County at 1,756 new movers. [See [Table 5](#)].

Note:

When comparing the 2018 Current Population Estimates with 2017 or prior year Estimates, it appears that populations may have declined. **This is not the case.** For the 2018 population estimates, the U.S. Census Bureau revised its methodology for estimating net international migration. This adjustment, which was used to re-estimate international migration for all years in the current decade, lowered the distribution of international migrants to Maryland compared to previous estimates and filtered down to the jurisdictions.

³ Percent calculated based on Tables [1A](#) and [3A](#).